

Satellite Background

FBIS-BBC PROPOSED SOURCELINE PRINCIPLES - GENERAL RULES LISTED IN
31 MARCH LETTER

I. Basic Principles

1. A sourceline should contain no information that is not available from monitoring.

(Comment: The principle is sound, but grounds for implementing it are vague. in his "clarifying" letter, explains that "monitoring" includes technical evidence, official schedules and other publications, correspondence and observations "that can be verified." Our initial reaction to this is: what constitutes verification and can this issue be a future bone of contention between the two parties. BBC tends to favor the simple approach that the sourceline should reflect the announced beam and audience, but on occasion does modify sourcelines to reflect refinements available from technical observations and other sources of information. FBIS tends to weigh all the evidence in hand against the station announcement. If this evidence conflicts with the announcements, we settle for a sourceline which reflects reality. FBIS, as the recognized authority in its field, believes it has a responsibility to consumers to provide the most accurate sourceline possible based on announced audience, technical observations, and commonsense.)

STAT

(Recommendation: The Headquarters Working Group should review both approaches and determine which one is the most practical.)

2. Station identification within the sourcelines should use no more words than are needed for maximum desirable precision.

(Comment: We fully support this principle. But we find that BBC often feels more words are needed for precision than we do. Since both sides agree with the principle, future interpretation is where the problems will lie. We accept this fact and must live with it.)

3. Sourcelines should not reflect distinctions such as "official," "semi-official," and "nonofficial" as applying to sourcelines.

(Comment: This is a reversal (which we were totally unaware was coming) of positions agreed upon in all earlier correspondence. FBIS negotiators asked for a definition of these terms, which were supplied in WA663 of 14 October 1975. We heard nothing further on this until the 31 March letter which stated that the BBC rejected this position and that the FBIS negotiators agreed with the BBC. FBIS and BBC have long distinguished official broadcasts from private and semi-official ones through sourcelines. Now BBC wants to include "domestic" in all domestic broadcast sourcelines. This will have virtually no impact on BBC, since its coverage is almost exclusively devoted to national radios. The majority of semi-official and private stations fall under FBIS coverage.)

(Recommendation: The working group must review the FBIS position of distinguishing between the different forms of broadcasts and determine if it is sound. If it is, is there some other way we can differentiate between these broadcasts without relying on "domestic" and "external" to imply national authority.)

II. General Rules

1. The word "service" shall be eliminated from all sourcelines.

(Comment: Previously agreed upon. No problems here. This was a concesssion on part of FBIS.)

2. The word "domestic" shall be used for broadcasts intended for a domestic audience which is not specified or confined to a particular region; either organization will include the target in the sourceline of domestic broadcasts intended for a specific audience or region, instead of "domestic," if it thinks it is useful to do so or if asked to do so by the other.

(Comment: This rule has been rephrased and use of the word "domestic" has been rejected to designate official broadcasts. This aspect of the rule has been discussed under the third basic principle section above. The second part of the rule represents agreement to disagree. [] explains in his 31 March letter that it was rephrased from the original proposal "to allow either

STAT

party the option to include or eliminate the destination (when given) as it chooses." The rephrasing, he adds, also seeks to expand the principle to encompass regional sourcelines. We have no problem with the agreement to disagree on this. But since all parties have agreed on this interpretation, we are puzzled by the inclusion in this version of the phrase "or if asked to do so by the other." ☐ indicates they are just words that do not change the meaning of the rule or principle. If so, why were they added. I think we will need further clarification as to intent of additional phrase, plus how binding it might be and extent to which it would be employed.)

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(Recommendation: The working group discussed both aspects of this rule, arriving at FBIS position on definition of an "official" domestic sourceline and determining whether clarification is required on rephrasing of the second part.)

3. The phrase "domestic and external" shall be used for any transmission which can be accurately determined to be intended for both domestic and external audiences.

(Comment: We have agreed on this, with FBIS making a concession to BBC here. But we may have a problem in listing sourcelines for those services which broadcast to those audiences separately as well as simultaneously during the day. We may have to seek clarification from BBC on this point.)

4. The word "external" shall be substituted for all phrases now used to indicate transmissions not intended for a domestic audience nor specifically targeted.

(Comment: We agreed to this rule, provided it was clear it applied to official external casts. BBC has ruled out this distinction. We must determine the FBIS position on basis of our decision on future designations of broadcasts.)

(Recommendation: The working group must study this rule as part of the overall review of our position on designating the source of authority behind each broadcast.)

5. In the case of broadcasts for named targets outside the country in which the radio is located either organization will include the target instead of the word "external" if it thinks it useful to do so or if asked to do so by the other.

(Comment: This is another case of agreeing to disagree. But inclusion of phrase "or if asked to do so by the other" must be defined.)

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(Recommendation: The working group should consider this rule in conjunction with the study on rule two.)

6. When a sourceline is to include destination the word "to"

and not "for" should be used in description of destination.

(Comment: We are in agreement. This is BBC concession to FBIS.)

7. The field bureaus will include the name of the country as the first word in sourcelines to which it can be usefully added.

(Comment: Apart from PRC regional sourcelines which list the province, FBIS only includes the country in one other sourceline: Santiago Chile to distinguish between Santiago Cuba. We agreed to BBC submitting a list of countries they would like to apply this rule to, but have not yet received that list (unless the examples attached to the 31 March letter represent that list). Since FBIS policy has always been to include the broadcast city as the first element of the sourceline, we are puzzled why BBC chose to deviate from this procedure and list the country first. We would prefer to list the country second.)

8. Either organization will include the target instead of the word "external" in sourcelines for press agencies if it thinks it is useful to do so or if asked to do so by the other.

(Comment: This is another agree to disagree situation. FBIS has not included destinations in press agency sourcelines for many years. Rephrasing makes it vague as to whether this is still optional

or binding if a request is made. This rule must be considered with rules two and five, since situations are identical.)

9. For what are no^w called "clandestine" radios, the phrase "location undisclosed" shall be used instead of "clandestine" and it shall be placed at the beginning of the sourceline. X

(Comment: We are in disagreement on this one. We have agreed to placing "clandestine" first in the sourceline, but cannot accept "location undisclosed" as a suitable substitute. The London group says ^{AFTER} ~~so~~ much soul-searching it cannot accept clandestine. X

(Recommendation: Our working group must review the FBIS position on the term "clandestine." We should seek the best possible term. If clandestine is still the best term, we must see if this rule can be placed in the agree to disagree category.)

The London working group was unable to come up with a jointly agreed principle to cover telegraf services other than news agencies. This still leaves maritime and diplomatic services. They would like our views on this subject.